

# Winter Weather Preparedness

# Emergency Kits



# Emergency Kits

- A disaster supplies kit is simply a collection of basic items your household may need in the event of an emergency.
- You may need to survive on your own after an emergency.
  - Stock enough food, water, and other supplies to last for at least 72 hours.

# Maintaining Your Kit

- Keep canned food in a cool, dry place.
- Store boxed food in tightly closed plastic or metal containers to protect from pests and to extend its shelf life.
- Throw out any canned good that becomes swollen, dented or corroded.
- Use foods before they go bad and replace them with fresh supplies.

# Maintaining Your Kit

- Place new items at the back of the storage area and older ones in the front.
- Change stored food and water supplies every six months. Be sure to write the date you store it on all containers.
- Re-think your needs every year and update your kit as your family's needs change.
- If you or a family member takes prescription medicine, have the medicine readily available.

# Emergency Kits in the Home

- Your disaster supplies kit should contain **essential food, water and supplies** for at least *three days*.
- Keep this kit in a designated place and *have it ready* in case you have to leave your home quickly.
- Make sure all family members **know where the kit is kept**.
- Additionally, you may want to consider having supplies for sheltering for up to two weeks.



**Supplies for your Vehicle**

# Supplies for your Vehicle

- Jumper cables
- Flashlights and extra batteries
- First aid kit and necessary medications
- Food items such as nuts and energy bars; and canned fruit
- Plentiful Water
- AM/FM radio to listen to traffic reports and emergency messages



# Supplies for your Vehicle Cont'

- Cat litter or sand for better tire traction
- Shovel
- Ice scraper
- Warm clothes, gloves, hat, sturdy boots, jacket and an extra change of clothes
- Blankets or sleeping bags
- Also consider flares or reflective triangle

# Winterize Your Vehicle

• **Check or have a mechanic check the following items on your car:**

- **Antifreeze levels –**
  - Ensure they are sufficient to avoid freezing.
- **Battery and ignition system –**
  - Battery terminals should be clean.
- **Brakes –**
  - Check for wear and fluid levels.
- **Exhaust system –**
  - Check for leaks and crimped pipes.
  - Carbon monoxide is deadly and usually gives no warning.
- **Fuel and air filters –**
  - Replace and keep water out of the system by using additives and maintaining a full tank of gas.
  - A full tank will keep the fuel line from freezing.
- **Heater and defroster –**
  - Ensure they work properly.
- **Lights and flashing hazard lights –**
  - Check for serviceability.
- **Oil –**
  - Check for level and weight. Heavier oils congeal more at low temperatures and do not lubricate as well.
- **Thermostat –**
  - Ensure it works properly.
- **Windshield wiper equipment –**
  - Repair any problems and maintain proper washer fluid level.
- **Install good winter tires –**
  - Make sure the tires have adequate tread.



# Winter Storms and Extreme Cold

# Winter Storms & Extreme Cold

- Extreme winter weather can:
  - knock out heat, power, and communications to your home or office
  - can immobilize an entire region due to heavy snowfall and extreme cold
  - These effects can last for days at a time.
- Before winter approaches, add the following supplies to your emergency kit:
  - **Rock salt** to melt ice on walkways.
  - **Sand** to improve traction.
  - Snow **shovels** and other snow removal equipment.
  - Sufficient **heating fuel**. You may become isolated in your home and regular fuel sources may be cut off. Store a good supply of dry, seasoned wood for your fireplace or wood-burning stove.
  - Adequate **clothing and blankets** to keep you warm.

# Winter Storms & Extreme Cold

- Listen to a NOAA Weather Radio or other local news channels for critical information from the National Weather Service (NWS).
  - Be alert to changing weather conditions.
- Minimize travel.
  - If travel is necessary, keep a disaster supplies kit in your vehicle.
- Bring pets/companion animals inside during winter weather. Move other animals or livestock to sheltered areas with non-frozen drinking water.

# During Winter Storms and Extreme Cold

- **Stay indoors** during the storm.
- **Walk carefully** on snowy, icy, walkways.
- **Avoid overexertion** when shoveling snow.
  - Overexertion can bring on a heart attack—a major cause of death in the winter.
  - If you must shovel snow, **stretch** before going outside.
- **Keep dry.**
  - Change wet clothing frequently to prevent a loss of body heat.
  - Wet clothing loses all of its insulating value and transmits heat rapidly.
- **Watch for signs of frostbite.**
  - These include loss of feeling and white or pale appearance in extremities such as fingers, toes, ear lobes, and the tip of the nose.
  - If symptoms are detected, get medical help immediately.

# During Winter Storms and Extreme Cold

- Watch for signs of hypothermia.
  - Uncontrollable shivering
  - Memory loss
  - Disorientation
  - Incoherence
  - Slurred speech
  - Drowsiness
  - Apparent exhaustion
- If symptoms of hypothermia are detected, get the victim to a warm location, remove wet clothing, warm the center of the body first and give warm, non-alcoholic beverages if the victim is conscious. Get medical help as soon as possible.
- Drive only if it is absolutely necessary. If you must drive: travel in the day; don't travel alone; keep others informed of your schedule; stay on main roads and avoid back road shortcuts.
- Let someone know your destination, your route, and when you expect to arrive. If your car gets stuck along the way, help can be sent along your predetermined route.

# Dress for the Weather

- If you must go outside, wear several layers of loose-fitting, lightweight, warm clothing rather than one layer of heavy clothing.
  - The outer garments should be tightly woven and water repellent.
- Wear mittens, which are warmer than gloves.
- Wear a hat.
  - A hat will prevent loss of body heat.
- Cover your mouth with a scarf to protect your lungs.



# After Winter Storms and Extreme Cold

- Go to a designated public shelter if your home loses power or heat during periods of extreme cold.
  - Text **SHELTER** + your ZIP code to **43362** (4FEMA) to find the nearest shelter in your area
    - (example: *shelter 12345*).
- Continue to protect yourself from frostbite and hypothermia by wearing warm, loose-fitting, lightweight clothing in several layers.
- **Stay indoors, if possible.**



**If You Are Stranded in Your  
Vehicle**

# If stranded in your vehicle during a blizzard:

- Pull off the highway.

- Turn on **hazard lights** and hang a distress flag from the radio antenna or window.

- Remain in your vehicle where rescuers are most likely to find you.

- Do not set out on foot unless you can see a building close by where you know you can take shelter. Be careful!

- Run the engine and heater about 10 minutes each hour to keep warm.

- When the engine is running, open a downwind window slightly for ventilation and periodically clear snow from the exhaust pipe. This will protect you from possible carbon monoxide poisoning.

- Exercise to maintain body heat, but avoid overexertion.

- In extreme cold, use road maps, seat covers, and floor mats for insulation. Huddle with passengers and use your coat for a blanket.

# If stranded in your vehicle during a blizzard:

- Take turns sleeping.

- One person should be awake at all times to look for rescue crews.

- Eat regularly and drink ample fluids to avoid dehydration, but avoid caffeine and alcohol.

- Be careful not to waste battery power.

- Balance electrical energy needs - the use of lights, heat, and radio - with supply.

- Turn on the inside light at night so work crews or rescuers can see you.

- Leave the car and proceed on foot - if necessary - once the blizzard passes.